

Jerusalem Center for Public Affairs

THE DEEP ROOTS OF ANTI-SEMITISM IN EUROPEAN SOCIETY

Author(s): Manfred Gerstenfeld

Source: *Jewish Political Studies Review*, Vol. 17, No. 1/2 (Spring 2005), pp. 3-46

Published by: [Jerusalem Center for Public Affairs](#)

Stable URL: <http://www.jstor.org/stable/25834618>

Accessed: 19-10-2015 14:24 UTC

Your use of the JSTOR archive indicates your acceptance of the Terms & Conditions of Use, available at <http://www.jstor.org/page/info/about/policies/terms.jsp>

JSTOR is a not-for-profit service that helps scholars, researchers, and students discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content in a trusted digital archive. We use information technology and tools to increase productivity and facilitate new forms of scholarship. For more information about JSTOR, please contact support@jstor.org.



Jerusalem Center for Public Affairs is collaborating with JSTOR to digitize, preserve and extend access to *Jewish Political Studies Review*.

<http://www.jstor.org>

THE DEEP ROOTS OF ANTI-SEMITISM IN EUROPEAN SOCIETY¹

Manfred Gerstenfeld

The resurgence of European anti-Semitism after the Holocaust suggests that it has deep roots in society. It has been fostered in a great variety of ways by so many, for such a long time, in all European countries that one might consider this form of hate and discrimination as inherent to European culture and a part of European "values." New European anti-Semitism often originates from a young age group, which indicates that it is an anti-Semitism of the future rather than of the past.

The European Union's attitude toward anti-Semitism is double-handed. Through its discriminatory declarations and votes in international bodies the EU acts as an arsonist, fanning the flames of anti-Semitism in its anti-Israeli disguise. Simultaneously it also serves as fireman, trying to quench the flames of classic religious and ethnic anti-Semitism. France is paradigmatic of this approach. Although European anti-Semitism cannot be eradicated, certain steps can be taken to mitigate it. This requires a major change in discriminatory EU policies toward Israel. In the meantime there are increasing indications that the European battle against anti-Semitism may be used, to the contrary, to facilitate attacks on Israel.

Jewish Political Studies Review 17:1 (Spring 2005)

Integral to European Culture

A substantial number of Europeans hold anti-Semitic opinions. The widespread resurgence of European anti-Semitism after the Holocaust suggests it is inherent in European culture and values. This does not imply that all or most Europeans are anti-Semites. In a similar manner, a significant number of Europeans like ballet, while many others find it boring, decadent, or disgusting. Yet dancing is part of European culture and has been practiced as a performing art for a long time. It originated in Europe, developed over many years, and is widely taught as well as frequently discussed by the cultural elite and shown in the major media.

European anti-Semitism can be said to have similar characteristics. That many Europeans condemn, dislike, or are indifferent to anti-Semitism does not contradict its role in European culture, as statements of European politicians, the mainstream media, and leading intellectuals prove. Also, various types of anti-Semitic sentiments are expressed in polls. The statistics would probably reveal that the number of European anti-Semites far exceeds those who like ballet.

A phenomenon that develops intensely in an entire continent over a period of many centuries becomes deeply embedded in the societal mindset and behavior. The anti-Semitic wave of the past few years seems to prove that it is impossible to eradicate such a deep-seated irrational attitude.

European Anti-Semitism: Alive, Active, and Virulent

In the words of UK Chief Rabbi Jonathan Sacks:

Let me state the point as simply as I can: anti-Semitism is alive, active and virulent in the year 2002, after more than half a century of Holocaust education, interfaith dialogue, United Nations' declarations, dozens of museums and memorials, hundreds of films, thousands of courses, and tens of thousands of books dedicated to exposing its evils; after the Stockholm Conference, after the creation of a National Holocaust Memorial Day, after 2,000 religious leaders came together in the United Nations in August 2000 to commit themselves to fight hatred and engender mutual respect....What more could have been done? What more could and can we do to fight anti-Semitism?²

Two years later, Sacks's ideas had evolved. He asserted that when civilizations clash, Jews die. In his view, in certain European circles, revenge is being taken against the Jews because "nobody will ever

forgive the Jews for the Holocaust.” Sacks drew attention to the manipulation of words, like genocide and ethnic cleansing, by Israel’s adversaries. He added that what should have been learned from the Holocaust is: “one, that bad things are preceded by demonization—and right now Israelis are being demonized—and, two, the early warning sign in culture is when words lose their meaning.”³

The often-heard argument that postwar European anti-Semitism parallels developments in the Middle East conflict is untrue. It appears in waves, which may, but do not necessarily, correspond to developments in the Israeli-Arab conflict, with each wave being higher than the previous one.⁴ In the Arab world, anti-Jewish incitement continued in parallel with the Oslo process.

A Millennium of Violence

The beginning of violent European anti-Semitism is often traced to the Crusades at the end of the eleventh century. Others claim it commenced in 1010 with organized mass murders of Jews in France, followed by massacres in areas that are now part of Germany.⁵ For almost a thousand years the many versions of religious anti-Semitism have been accompanied by other manifestations of Jew-hatred in political, economic, and cultural spheres.

The ethnic or “racist” variant of political Jew-hatred began in the late 19th century in Germany. At that time the term anti-Semitism first appeared. Fed also by the religious variety, this culminated in the genocide of the Holocaust.

Post-Holocaust Discrimination

After the Holocaust, European anti-Semitism did not disappear. In the immediate postwar period, democratic societies such as Norway, the Netherlands, and others discriminated in various ways against the Jews in many domains.⁶ Often the returning Jews were not welcome.

Norwegian historian Bjarte Bruland, who played a key role in the national restitution negotiations of the mid-1990s, says that among the survivors of the small prewar Norwegian Jewish community there were many “stateless Jews who had fled to Sweden, some of whom had lived in Norway for as long as 50 years, prior to the war. The Norwegian government initially refused to allow them to return to the country, a position which only later changed.”⁷

Postwar legislation and its implementation in many countries frequently favored those who possessed the Jews’ stolen property while,

at the same time, liberated countries embellished their war history. The Netherlands provides one of many examples, including in regard to Anne Frank's memory.

Twentieth-century Europe was a continent where a war criminal or a mass murderer had a better chance to survive than a Jewish child. The reason for this was twofold: the murderous character of the Holocaust and the subsequent leniency of European democratic societies toward those who had murdered Jews.⁸

In the 21st century one might add that if all contemporary hardcore anti-Semites in Western Europe were to pass away, the number of dead there would by far exceed those of the Second World War.

Many classic anti-Semitic prejudices are currently widespread in European society, while new ones are developing rapidly. There are multiple forms of Jew-hatred among politicians, the media, the cultural elite, Christian clergy, schoolchildren, the less educated, among extreme rightists and the liberal Left, and especially in European Arab and Islamic circles.

Modern media, such as television and the Internet, disseminate anti-Semitic writings and cartoons with great speed, adding to the globalization of Jew-hatred. There are globally more than three thousand anti-Semitic websites.⁹ This gives the phenomenon an intensity and immediacy it did not have when the Nazis began spreading their propaganda. Millions of people saw a Syrian-produced movie on television that, among other things, showed a child's throat being cut. This was made to appear as though being done by a Jew, and using cinematic techniques, the image showed blood streaming into a matzoh.¹⁰

Christian Anti-Semitism

Multiple remnants of Christian anti-Semitism remain, to which new elements are added. Greece is one of the old EU members where the phenomenon is particularly developed. In April 2004, the Simon Wiesenthal Center (SWC) of Los Angeles wrote to the newly elected prime minister, Kostas Karamanlis of the New Democrat Party, that the Greek National Tourist Organization was promoting the Easter ritual of "burning [the effigy] of Judas" as a tourist attraction. Hundreds of local ceremonies include this ritual, which is sometimes described as the "Burning of the Jew."¹¹ This is only one among many expressions of Christian anti-Semitism in Greece.

Rabbi Mordechai Frisis of Salonika says that "Greece is a very traditional society, and they blame the Jews for killing Jesus. There are still people who believe that Jews drink the blood of Christians

on Passover.” As a student at a Greek high school, he said, “there were people who said this openly to me.”¹²

Although the Greek Orthodox Church has, in the past, officially condemned the “Burning of the Jew” ritual, this has had little influence. The archbishop of Athens, Christodoulos, occasionally makes from time to time negative comments about the Jews. has an ambivalent [nothing is said about any positive side of his attitude] attitude toward Jews. In August 2003, he visited the Majdanek extermination camp in Poland. In his speech, however, there was no reference to the Holocaust even though the great majority of the victims were Jewish. He did not mention the 1,500 Greek Jews murdered there, even as Greek citizens.¹³

In 2001, Christodoulos blamed the Jews for being behind the Greek government’s decision to abide by EU rules that oppose including one’s religion on state identity cards.¹⁴ In 2004 he congratulated George Karatzaferis, leader of the xenophobic anti-Semitic right-wing party Laos, on his “deserving election” to the European Parliament, and added: “you will bring to the broader European family the other intellectual values that spring out of your Christian and Greek soul.”¹⁵

New Anti-Semitism

The most recent major version of anti-Semitism, which has radically intensified in the last few decades, targets Israel, the Jewish state. This variant of Jew-hatred is now commonly referred to as “new anti-Semitism.” Its perpetrators often call themselves anti-Zionists. They aim to isolate Israel and portray it—in the words of the Berlin Technical University’s Center for Research on Anti-Semitism—“as a state that is fundamentally negatively distinct from all others, which therefore has no right to exist.”¹⁶

As Canadian Justice Minister Irwin Cotler observed: “Traditional anti-Semitism denied Jews the right to live as equal members of society, but the new anti-Jewishness denies the right of the Jewish people to live as an equal member of the family of nations.”¹⁷

Former Swedish Deputy Prime Minister Per Ahlmark pointed out:

Anti-Zionism today has become very similar to anti-Semitism. Anti-Zionists accept the right of other peoples to national feelings and a defensible state. But they reject the right of the Jewish people to have its national consciousness expressed in the State of Israel and to make that state secure. Thus, they are not judging Israel with the values used to judge other countries. Such discrimination against Jews is called anti-Semitism.¹⁸

The Source of All Evil

Anti-Semitism is an extreme form of irrational hate, which should not be confused with strong criticism.¹⁹ Jews have been demonized for millennia and defined as the source of all evil.

A contemporary variant of this ancient motif was introduced by the Greek racist composer and former minister, Mikis Theodorakis, who stated at a press conference in November 2003: "We are two nations without brothers in the world, us [the Greeks] and the Jews, but they have fanaticism and are forceful.... Today we can say that this small nation is the root of evil, not of good, which means that too much self-importance and too much stubbornness is evil.... They only had Abraham and Jacob, shadows... we had the great Pericles...." Among the audience were the Socialist government ministers, Culture Minister Evangelos Venizelos and Education Minister Petros Efthymiou, who did not react.²⁰

Other recourses to ancient history are often used in Europe to "point to an immutable negative Jewish character."²¹ Jews have also been discriminated against in many societies while, simultaneously, having double moral standards applied to them.

Both in the 1930s and in the more remote past, European societies frequently established discriminatory laws against Jews. When this legislation was later abolished, de facto discrimination often remained. Over a long period of time Jews have been presented as being inhuman, and this has laid the ideological basis for their murder, culminating in the Holocaust. A similar defamatory approach is now being applied to Israel, aiming at its elimination as a Jewish state.

Radical left-wing anti-Semitism is often connected with Arab and extreme right-wing anti-Semitism. These typically act independently while working toward similar goals. For example, an article published in the French progressive weekly *Le Nouvel Observateur* in November 2001 included a claim that Israeli soldiers rape Palestinian women at checkpoints so that the women will later be subjected to "honor killings" by their families. The author, the daughter of the paper's Jewish editor Jean Daniel, thus reiterated Palestinian hate propaganda. After protests, the paper was forced to admit the allegation was untrue, but tried to belittle its importance.²²

Yet another example is the visit of the Egyptian Muslim cleric Yusuf al-Qaradawi, who lives in Qatar, to London in July 2004. There he praised the Palestinian suicide bombings, and was given a cordial welcome by the Labour mayor of London, Ken Livingstone, who appeared jointly with him. Before his arrival, the Board of Deputies of British Jews gave the police a dossier containing the texts of interviews with the cleric broadcast in Britain. The British authorities

decided that there was “insufficient evidence” of a criminal offense to prevent his visit.²³

The State-Owned Media

Several government-owned media in Europe discriminate against Israel and the Jews. Sometimes they even incite explicit hatred against them. Allowing them to do so is an indirect expression of government anti-Semitism. Frequently these attacks come from left-wing journalists.

There are many discriminatory gradations on the left side of the political spectrum. British litigation lawyer Trevor Asserson has revealed systematic anti-Israeli bias in the BBC’s reporting on the Middle East. Although one can argue to what degree this defamation contains anti-Semitic elements, Asserson’s conclusion that the distorted reporting creates an atmosphere in which anti-Semitism can thrive is convincing.²⁴

In December 2003, French comedian Dieudonné appeared on the state-owned France 3 television channel dressed as an ultra-Orthodox Jew, making the Hitler salute and shouting “Heil Israel.”²⁵ This racist subsequently founded a party which ran unsuccessfully for the European Parliament, and received his votes mainly in areas with a substantial North African immigrant community.

Malcolm Hoenlein, executive vice-chairman of the Conference of Presidents of Major American Jewish Organizations, mentions yet another obsession of European media: that of Jewish power. “In every interview with the BBC and other European and Japanese media, the main question inevitably boils down to the influence of ‘the Jewish lobby.’ They do not understand and, therefore, ascribe negative connotations to what is consistent with American democracy, which offers minorities a say if they choose to get involved.”²⁶

The Differences between Anti-Semitism and Criticism

It is often difficult to specify the border between criticism of Israel and anti-Semitism. Cotler has suggested some guidelines. He claims that critics of Israel become anti-Semites when:

1. They publicly call for the destruction of Israel and the Jewish people. This is the case with the covenants of Palestinian terrorist groups (the PLO and Hamas) and some militant Islamic legal

- rulings (*fatawin*), as well as the Iranian threat to annihilate Israel (“genocidal anti-Semitism”).
2. They deny the Jewish people’s right to self-determination, delegitimize Israel as a state, and attribute to Israel all the world’s evil (“political anti-Semitism”).
 3. They Nazify Israel (“ideological anti-Semitism”).
 4. Israel is characterized as the perfidious enemy of Islam (“theological anti-Semitism”).
 5. Israel is attributed a mix of evil qualities by salon intellectuals and Western elites (“cultural anti-Semitism”).
 6. They call for restrictions against those trading with Israel (“economic anti-Semitism”).
 7. They deny the Holocaust.
 8. They support racist terrorism against Israel.
 9. They single out Israel for discriminatory treatment in the international arena through denial of equality before the law.²⁷

Anti-Israeli Religious Motifs

A growing list of anti-Semitic events and writings in Europe illustrates the development of these categories of new anti-Semitism. Cartoons are effective tools to rapidly elucidate key elements of a society’s culture, including its anti-Semitism. Their iconography is limited, appealing to a few core images and ideas with which the public at large is familiar. If one puts some caricatures from European mainstream media next to those from rabid Arab anti-Semitic newspapers, one often cannot identify which one comes from what source.

A religious anti-Semitic motif was used in criticizing Israel by the Italian quality daily *La Stampa*. It published a cartoon—one of Europe’s classics of new anti-Semitism—of the IDF’s siege of the Church of Nativity in Bethlehem that showed an Israeli tank turning on the infant Jesus, who asks: “Surely, they don’t want to kill me again?”²⁸ This iconography revives the classic, religious, anti-Semitic motif of deicide, a murderous hate motif that the Catholic Church has instilled in European populations for many centuries and is part of the European cultural heritage.

The cartoon’s underlying associations are twofold. First, the classic anti-Semitic one of deicide: “Jesus, son of God, Church of Nativity, victim of killing by Jews.” Second: “Palestinians, Church of Nativity, potential victims of killing by Israelis.” A closer look at the cartoon reveals that its underlying, twisted metaphor can be used against the cartoonist’s intention in many ways. One can also read it as suggesting that the Palestinian murderers who fled to the Church—and whom the Israelis intended to arrest rather than kill—

are contemporary sons of God. Some alternative interpretations are even more provocative.

This anti-Semitic cartoon says more about the cartoonist and the *La Stampa* editor who vetted it than about the subject of the hate. The Palestinian murderers who entered the church have been turned into victims, a concept that is becoming increasingly acceptable in European society.

The crucifixion motif was also central in a cartoon of the Belgian Flemish daily *Nieuwsblad* after the Palestinian cleric and inciter to murder, Sheikh Ahmed Yassin, was killed. It showed the Hamas leader in a wheelchair on a cross, part of which was a rocket; the caption read: "Israel kills spiritual leader."²⁹

The British daily *The Independent* published a second European classic of new anti-Semitism—a cartoon by Dave Brown showing Prime Minister Sharon as a child-eater. The libel that Jews use the blood of Gentile children for religious purposes originated in England during the Middle Ages. When solicited, the UK Press Complaints Commission cleared the cartoon. Subsequently it won the UK "Political Cartoon of the Year Award for 2003" of the Political Cartoon Society. The competition was held on 25 November 2003 on *The Economist* weekly's premises and the award was presented to Brown by Labour MP and former Minister for Overseas Aid Claire Short.³⁰

Presenting Jews as Nazis

Comparisons between Jews and Nazis focus on Sharon and Hitler, as well as the swastika and the Star of David. In a 2002 cartoon the Greek daily *Ethnos*, close to the then-ruling Pasok socialist party, showed two Jewish soldiers dressed as Nazis with Stars of David on their helmets, putting knives in Arabs. The text read: "Do not feel yourself guilty, my brother. We were not in Auschwitz and Dachau to suffer, but to learn."³¹ This one completes the selected trio of Europe's classic new anti-Semitic cartoons.

In July 2004 the leading progressive Spanish daily *El Pais*, considered the country's quality paper, published a cartoon in which two people exchange comments on Israel's security fence. The woman says: "Sharon's wall is identical to the Warsaw Ghetto Wall." The man answers: "They are not comparable. Sharon's wall is by far more effective."³²

Taken together, these well-known European cartoons of the past few years contain most of the major classic and new anti-Semitic motifs. Deicide, bloodlust, child murder, and Holocaust inversion recur. The same themes appear in the hate caricatures published in the

Arab world. They provide substantial insight into the societies where they are published. This author regularly shows them in public presentations in order to illustrate the essence of current mainstream European anti-Semitism.

Hate cartoons are more visible than the broad-ranging collection of anti-Semitic remarks in mainstream papers. British poet and Oxford academic Tom Paulin told an Egyptian newspaper that Jewish settlers in the West Bank are “Nazis and racists [who] should be shot dead.”³³ Portuguese Nobel Prize-winning author Jose Saramago, a communist, compared the blockaded Palestinian city of Ramallah to Auschwitz.³⁴ When visiting Brazil he declared that the Jewish people no longer deserve sympathy for the suffering they endured during the Holocaust.³⁵

Some anti-Semitic authors quote Jews so as to make themselves more acceptable. Paulin did so in *The Observer* when he preceded one of his poems with a 1934 text of the linguist Victor Klemperer: “To me the Zionists, who want to go back to the Jewish state of 70AD... are just as offensive as the Nazis. With their nosing after blood, their ancient ‘cultural roots,’ their partly canting, partly obtuse winding back of the world, they are altogether a match for the National Socialists.”

Klemperer, who converted to Protestantism in his youth, survived the Second World War in Dresden under Nazi rule thanks to his mixed marriage. There, and later also under communist governments, he had ample occasion to reflect on his comparison of Nazis and Zionists. Paulin’s poem, coming after the quote from Klemperer, spoke of “another little Palestinian boy in trainers jeans and a white tee-shirt being gunned down by the Zionist SS.”³⁶

Applying Double Standards

Cotler points to the United Nations as a paradigm of double standards practiced against Israel: “Despite the killing fields throughout the world, the UN Security Council sat from March to May 2002 in almost continuous session discussing a non-existent massacre in Jenin.”³⁷

He also mentions the UN Commission on Human Rights meeting in spring 2002:

Forty percent of the resolutions passed were against one member state of the international community, Israel, while the major human rights violators in the world such as China and Iran enjoyed exculpatory immunity with no resolutions passed against them. This moral

asymmetry not only prejudices Israel, but it further undermines the UN's integrity under whose auspices this occurs, and the authority of international human rights law in whose name these indictments are passed.³⁸

Canadian political scientist Anne Bayefsky wrote about the UN World Conference against Racism in Durban, South Africa in September 2001: "It became a forum for racism....A large group of states sought to minimize or exclude references to the Holocaust, redefine or ignore anti-Semitism, and to isolate the state of Israel from the global community as a racist practitioner of apartheid and crimes against humanity."³⁹

Cotler also referred to the Geneva Convention, noting:

During more than 50 years after the Second World War atrocities continued. Among the best known are the ethnic cleansing and genocide in Cambodia, Rwanda, Bosnia, Sudan and Sierra Leone. Despite these horrific breaches of the Geneva Convention, which was adopted in 1949, the contracting parties were never convened to discuss them. The only time this happened was in December 2001 when the contracting parties to the Convention gathered in Geneva to accuse Israel of human rights violations and breaches of the Convention.⁴⁰

Many other examples of anti-Israeli discrimination in international bodies can be given, such as that Israel's Magen David Adom (the Red Star of David) is excluded from the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent societies.

Alan Dershowitz remarked on these double standards: "The Jewish people's right to self-determination is denied and Israel as a state is delegitimized. Among Western elites one finds seemingly respectable academics, who call for the abolition of Israel and its substitution by a secular bi-national state. These authors know that this model has, for instance in Lebanon and Yugoslavia, been a recipe for mass murder and civil war."⁴¹

Democratic Europe's Criminal Inclinations

The discourse over the mingling of contemporary European values and anti-Semitism is likely to develop in the coming years. In an interview, French philosopher Jean-Claude Milner, author of *The Criminal Inclinations of Democratic Europe*, said: "I think there is an autochthonous anti-Semitism in Europe which doesn't come from the past but from the future....Today we see an anti-Semitism which doesn't

originate from old people, but from youth, and thus is not likely to disappear, but rather to become stronger....This is an actual problem. We are dealing with a modern anti-Semitism."⁴²

Milner added that European anti-Judaism is linked to the affirmation of Europe itself. On the one hand, it wants to assert itself vis-à-vis the United States. On the other, having realized its unity, it wants to present itself as a model for humanity. In his view, at the Anti-Racism Conference in Durban, Europe and the Islamic world found themselves standing together on an anti-Jewish platform.⁴³

The importance of Milner's words derives not only from his reputation but also from the fact that he is a non-Jew. The ongoing delegitimization of Jews in Europe has created a situation where Jews who make similar remarks are frequently accused of being biased by their ethnicity, irrespective of the quality of their arguments. To strengthen their credibility, Jewish authors today often have to quote non-Jewish opinions.

An outspoken example of this discriminatory attitude occurred when the editor of *The Observer*, a British progressive weekly, allowed columnist Richard Ingrams to write: "I have developed a habit when confronted by letters to the editor in support of the Israeli government to look at the signature to see if the writer has a Jewish name. If so, I tend not to read it."⁴⁴

Preparing European Anti-Semitism of the Future

The persistent, multifaceted incitement against Israel and the Jews has permeated many layers of European society, providing further evidence for the forecasts on Europe's future anti-Semitism. An example is the testimony by an American Jewish schoolgirl, Emma Goldman, who for some time attended Oxford High School, an exclusive British institution.

She was confronted there with stereotypes such as, "I reckon you do not look very Jewish. Most Jewish girls have big noses and Afros." When the teacher asked the pupils to suggest a list of great tragedies in history, nobody mentioned the Holocaust. Emma then proposed it, but the teacher did not even add it to the list she wrote on the board. Emma concluded: "Apparently the death of 6 million of my extended family didn't qualify as a tragedy."

When Sheikh Ahmed Yassin was killed, one pupil said to another that: "Israel killed one of the Palestinian spiritual leaders, a poor holy man in a wheelchair." The other was concerned and the first girl added, "How dare the Israelis do something like that."

Emma notes that she had remained silent through many previous expressions of sympathy for “the desperation of the Palestinian suicide bombers.” This time she defended Israel, but her classmate dismissed her point of view. “She believed Israel was an evil empire that had to be obliterated. The Palestinian murderers were freedom fighters. And Hamas was not a terrorist organization, but a religious organization now deprived of its ‘spiritual leader.’”⁴⁵

In some parts of Western Europe this can be considered a relatively benign experience. An entire book in French, *The Lost Territories of the Republic*,⁴⁶ is devoted to the repeated violence against Jewish schoolchildren in France—mainly by children of Maghrebian ancestry—over a period dating back many years. This phenomenon bears much resemblance to an iceberg: most of the problems are not seen and not reported, so they are underestimated.

Anti-Semitism and Anti-Americanism

The classical anti-Semitic motif of a Jewish conspiracy aiming to dominate the world reemerges in new forms. Josef Joffe, editor of the German weekly *Die Zeit*, comments that certain circles in Europe and the Arab world connect hatred of America with hatred of the Jews. They maintain that the Jewish desire to rule the world is today being realized mainly through the “American conquest.”⁴⁷

There are both important similarities and differences between European anti-Semitism and anti-Americanism. Alvin Rosenfeld encapsulated the similarities by noting: “Anti-Americanism functions in much the same way anti-Semitism has over the centuries—as a convenient focus for discontents of many different kinds and a ready-made explanation of internal weaknesses, disappointments, and failures. It is, in short, both fraudulent and counterproductive.” As an example Rosenfeld mentioned the leading German philosopher, Peter Sloterdijk, who in a 2002 interview in the Austrian journal *Profil* named America and Israel as the only two countries today that struck him as being “rogue states.”⁴⁸

The thesis that Europe builds its identity on opposition to the United States has been indirectly confirmed by two of Europe’s leading thinkers, Frenchman Jacques Derrida and German Jürgen Habermas, who jointly wrote that the major anti-Iraq War demonstrations on 15 February 2003 in London, Rome, Madrid, Barcelona, Berlin, and Paris might enter the history books as the beginning of a pan-European public awareness.⁴⁹

American political scientist Andrei Markovits analyzed the differences between European anti-Americanism and anti-Semitism:

While the two European prejudices overlap, there are also huge differences. Anti-Semitism has killed millions of people, while European anti-Americanism has only murdered a few. There were never any pogroms against Americans. Violence, as a rule, did not go further than the destruction of property and the burning of many American flags. There has never been a blood libel about Americans.⁵⁰

Markovits regards anti-Semitism as a longstanding tool of identity creation, and says that anti-Americanism plays a similar role today: "Nobody knows what it means to be a European. It is unclear what Greeks and Swedes have in common....Anti-Americanism thus enables the Europeans to create a hitherto missing European identity that must emerge if the European project is to succeed." He points out that anti-Americanism and anti-Semitism are the only major icons shared by the European extreme Left and far Right, including neo-Nazis.⁵¹

Kinds of Demonization

In the three major forms of anti-Semitism, the Jew is demonized as representing all evil. In "religious" anti-Semitism, the Jews—characterized as the devil or his associate—were blamed for killing Jesus, who was presented as God's son. In "racist" anti-Semitism, the Jews were accused of poisoning the world with their behavior and ideas. Today, "new" anti-Semites portray Israel as an evil state.

Once decision-makers are convinced that a person or a state embodies evil, the next step is for the "evil" to be segregated, subjugated, or even eliminated. In the Middle Ages, Jews were exiled or confined to European ghettos and denied many rights that the Christians enjoyed. Nazism aimed to eliminate the Jews, which led to the Holocaust. Its social anti-Semitism and delegitimization of the Jews set the stage for their physical destruction.

Anti-Semitism's Main Sources

Contemporary European anti-Semitism flourishes within three major sectors of European society. The first consists of the Arab and Islamic communities, large parts of which import from the Arab world the most virulent strain of anti-Semitism. These do not differentiate between Israelis and Jews. Their hate literature includes the 19th-century forgery, *The Protocols of the Elders of Zion*, which alleges that all Jews conspire to rule the world. Other major sources of hatred spread by

Arabs—including governments—propagate the libel that Jews use the blood of non-Jewish children to make matzoth.⁵²

The second sector where anti-Semitism is rife consists of the extreme Right and neo-Nazis. They mainly repeat the motifs propagated by Hitler's Germany, adding some new variants as well.

The third societal area marked by strong anti-Semitic expressions is the extreme Left. Its argumentation was largely developed by the Soviet Union in the years after the 1967 Six-Day War. This anti-Semitism—cloaked as anti-Zionism—accuses Israel of all the evils perpetrated by colonialist Europe. This propaganda is exceedingly evil because, as French linguist Georges-Elia Sarfati notes, it attaches “the four major negative characteristics of Western history in the last century—Nazism, racism, colonialism and imperialism—to the State of Israel.”⁵³

Few are aware that Soviet propaganda was at the root of Holocaust inversion and its systematic promotion for anti-Semitic purposes. Simon Epstein of Hebrew University relates how in 1953, French communist intellectuals organized a solidarity rally in Paris in support of the official Soviet position that mainly Jewish doctors had assassinated communist leaders. He adds that at the meeting many speakers, including Jews, “explained that it was normal to suspect doctors of poisoning people: one only had to look at Mengele's role in Auschwitz. If he was capable of what he did, why should other physicians not use poison?”⁵⁴

Often, European critics of Israel take their cues from Israeli ones. Yet there is a fundamental difference. Even though there are anti-Semites and Jewish self-haters among the Israeli Left, in Israel the domestic debate occurs within the context of a nation's cultural and political reality. In Europe it is imbued with a long-embedded anti-Semitic heritage and, therefore, can and does generate physical violence.

Mainstream Anti-Semitic Politicians

Since the 1980s, several high-level European politicians have made radical anti-Semitic declarations. In a public statement in 1982, Greek Socialist Prime Minister Andreas Papandreu compared Israelis to Nazis.⁵⁵ So did the Swedish social-democratic leader Olaf Palme, shortly before he became prime minister and again a few months later.⁵⁶

No mainstream European politician in the 1980s went as far as Christian Democrat Giulio Andreotti, who has headed several Italian cabinets. At an interparliamentary conference in Geneva on 7 April

1984, as Italy's foreign minister he supported a motion presented by Saddam Hussein's Iraq. It equated Zionism with racism, encouraged the boycotting of Israel, and defended the right of "armed struggle for the liberation of Palestine" (i.e., terrorism). Italy was the only Western European country to vote with the Soviet bloc for this motion.⁵⁷

In recent years such occurrences have become more widespread. In April 2002, Franco Cavalli spoke at a demonstration of the Swiss-Palestinian Society in Bern. He was then the parliamentary leader of the Social Democratic Party (SP), which is part of the Swiss governing coalition. He claimed that Israel "very purposefully massacres an entire people" and undertakes "the systematic extermination of the Palestinians." At the meeting Israeli flags were torched.⁵⁸

Senior members of the Greek Socialist Party often use Holocaust rhetoric to describe Israeli military actions.⁵⁹ In March 2002, parliamentary speaker Apostolos Kaklamanis referred to the "genocide" of the Palestinians. He was backed by the government spokesman, Christos Protopapas, who said that Kaklamanis spoke "with sensitivity and responsibility...expressing the sentiments of the Parliament and Greek people."⁶⁰

In July 2004 another well-known Israel-hater, Giorgos Katsanvakis, prefect of the Hania region of Crete, became vocal again. This member of the left-wing Synaspismos Party told Israeli Ambassador Ram Aviram that Sharon was the Anti-Christ. The diplomat walked out on him.⁶¹

Jenny Tonge, a Liberal Democrat Member of Parliament (UK), said at a meeting of the Palestinian solidarity campaign in January 2004 that if she lived in the Palestinian territories she might consider becoming a suicide bomber. In contrast to the above-mentioned cases, her party distanced itself from her position and stated: "Jenny Tonge was expressing her personal views. The Liberal Democrats do not condone terrorism."⁶²

The Nazis' Words in the German Mainstream

Norbert Blüm, a former German Christian Democrat minister of labor, wrote to Israeli ambassador Shimon Stein referring to Israel's "*Vernichtungskrieg*" against the Palestinians. This is the Nazi expression for a war of extermination. He repeated this in an interview with the weekly *Stern*.⁶³

The reactions to Blüm's statements on the Internet show that there is substantial sympathy for them. Nazi propagandists taught the Soviet inciters about the demonization of the Jews, which the

Soviets developed into the demonization of Zionism. From the Soviet Union, these methods penetrated the European Left. With Blüm, the circle has been completed. The abysmal hatred that started in Nazi Germany has now returned to the mainstream of democratic Germany.

Not all anti-Semitic attacks, however, refer to Israel or Israelis. In February 2004, Ian McCartney, chairman of the British Labour Party, attacked the Conservative economic spokesman in Parliament, Oliver Letwin, a Jew. He labeled him a “21st century Fagin,” a Jewish character described in extreme anti-Semitic terms in Charles Dickens’s novel *Oliver Twist*.⁶⁴

In spring 2003 the veteran Labour MP Tam Dalyell claimed that a “Jewish cabal” was operating in both the United States and Great Britain, driving the governments of both countries into war against Syria. He mentioned Lord Levy, Peter Mandelson, and Jack Straw as the Zionist advisers who influenced Prime Minister Blair. Besides the racist character of his remarks, the reality is that only Lord Levy is a practicing Jew. Mandelson has a Jewish father and reacted, “I am not actually Jewish, I wear my father’s parentage with pride.” Straw apparently has a Jewish grandfather.⁶⁵

The Polls

The campaign to demonize Israel in Europe has been accompanied by multiple manifestations of violence. This has been documented in various studies on European anti-Semitism. A major study, covering the first half of 2002, was undertaken by the Center for Research on Antisemitism for the European Monitoring Centre on Racism and Xenophobia (EUMC). It concluded: “France, Belgium, the Netherlands and the UK witnessed rather serious anti-Semitic incidents such as numerous physical attacks and insults directed against Jews and the vandalism of Jewish institutions (synagogues, shops, cemeteries). Fewer anti-Semitic attacks were reported from Denmark and Sweden.”⁶⁶

Many surveys also show how widespread European anti-Semitic prejudices are. A 2002 opinion poll carried out on behalf of the Anti-Defamation League in five countries, Austria, Switzerland, Spain, Italy, and the Netherlands, showed that one out of five respondents can be characterized as “most anti-Semitic.”⁶⁷ Twenty-nine percent believe Jews do not care what happens to anyone but themselves. Forty percent feel Jews have too much power in the business world and international financial markets. The majority perceives Jews as being more loyal to Israel than to their own

country.⁶⁸ An earlier survey dealt with France, Denmark, Germany, Belgium, and the United Kingdom and yielded broadly similar results.⁶⁹ However, the attitudes varied substantially among the ten countries researched in the two surveys.

An Italian poll conducted in the fall of 2003 by Paola Merulla showed that only 43 percent of Italians have sympathy for Israel. Seventeen percent of the population think it would be better if Israel did not exist. Within Italy, 51 percent thought the Jews, “besides having a different religion, have common social, cultural and political characteristics which are different from the rest of Italians.” Twenty percent of the Italian population think Jews are not real Italians; 10 percent think Jews lie when they maintain that Nazism murdered millions of Jews.⁷⁰

A few months earlier, a poll of two thousand young Italians (aged 14–18) sponsored by the umbrella organization of Italian Jewry under the auspices of Italy’s president, Carlo Azeglio Ciampi, showed substantial anti-Semitic stereotypes: “Nearly 35 percent of respondents agreed that ‘the financial power in the world is mostly in the hands of Jews.’ More than 17 percent believed that reports of the extermination of Jews during the Holocaust are ‘exaggerated,’ and 17.5 percent believed that Italian Jews should ‘return’ to Israel.”⁷¹

Israel: A Threat to World Peace

At the end of 2003 a Euro-barometer study, undertaken on behalf of the European Commission, found that more Europeans consider Israel a threat to world peace than any other country;⁷² that is, even more so than those states that send terrorists abroad to kill European civilians, finance murderous organizations, or have leaders who call for genocide.

Before Holocaust Day, 27 January 2004, another poll was released. It was conducted by the Ipsos Research Institute for the Italian newspaper *Corriere della Sera* in Italy, France, Belgium, Austria, Spain, the Netherlands, Luxembourg, Germany, and Britain. Of those polled, 46 percent said that Jews have a mentality and lifestyle different from other citizens, 40 percent felt that Jews in their country have a particular relationship with money, and 35 percent believed that the Jews should stop “playing the victim” regarding the Holocaust and its persecutions of sixty years ago. In all countries, anti-Semitic sentiment paralleled anti-Israeli sentiment.⁷³

Yet another poll, conducted by the ICM firm before Holocaust Day 2004 for the *Jewish Chronicle*, showed that almost 20 percent of Britons consider that a Jewish prime minister would be less

acceptable than a non-Jewish one. This is relevant in light of the fact that Michael Howard, leader of the Conservative Party, is the first Jew to lead a major political party in recent times. Fifteen percent thought the scale of the Holocaust had been exaggerated. Despite Holocaust education today, 19 percent of recent school-leavers also believed this.⁷⁴

It is mistaken to think this phenomenon has emerged only in recent years and is specifically linked to the Palestinian uprising. German anti-Semitism researcher Wolfgang Benz quotes an earlier statement of the former chairman of the Jewish community in Zurich, Sigi Feigel, that many Swiss have dismissed Jews from the conceptual world of the “evil Jew” only conditionally. As soon as anything happens, these people return to their old concepts. Feigel said that Jews are still only “conditional Swiss,” and that behind this is the assumption that they are first of all Jews and only secondly Swiss.⁷⁵

Insights

On the European Left, countervailing voices are heard only occasionally. An editorial in *Le Monde* commented on the Euro-barometer poll: “the results revealed, in any case, something extremely dangerous about the old continent.”⁷⁶

In November 2003, columnist Julie Burchill bid farewell to the readers of *The Guardian* as she moved to *The Times*. She said that while she liked the paper, there was one factor that made her feel less loyal to it over the past year: as a non-Jew she perceived its strong bias against Israel.

Commenting on the Euro-barometer poll, Burchill wrote:

If you take into account the theory that Jews are responsible for everything nasty in the history of the world, and also the recent EU survey that found 60 percent of Europeans believe Israel is the biggest threat to peace in the world today (hmm, I must have missed all those rabbis telling their flocks to go out with bombs strapped to their bodies and blow up the nearest mosque), it's a short jump to reckoning that it was obviously a bloody good thing that the Nazis got rid of six million of the buggers. Perhaps this is why sales of *Mein Kampf* are so buoyant, from the Middle Eastern bazaars into the Edgware Road, and why *The Protocols of the Elders of Zion* could be found for sale at the recent Anti-racism Congress in Durban.⁷⁷

Few European left-wing politicians are aware of how criticism of Israel has turned into anti-Semitism and where the borders lie.

One of these is German Foreign Minister Joschka Fischer. At a conference entitled "Anti-Semitism Today: Comparing European Debates," organized by the Heinrich Böll Foundation, he said in the opening session: "The government of Israel may be criticized for its policies...but Israel's right to exist as the national home of the Jewish people cannot be denied."⁷⁸ This assertion does not prevent Fischer from supporting the discriminatory anti-Israeli voting pattern of the European Union.

Ilka Schröder, who left Fischer's Green Party and was an independent member of the European Parliament until the 2004 elections, wrote:

It is a well-known fact that parts of the EU funding to the Palestinian Authority (945 million Eurodollars from 2000 to 2003) were channeled to an undisclosed budget and that the PA has financed a terrorist war against Israel....Instead of preventing the use of EU money to kill citizens of Israel, the majority of the political establishment dreams of an "international peace enforcement" against Israel, led or joined by the EU in the United Nations.⁷⁹

Similar to the 1930s?

There is an inclination to attribute attacks on the Jews in Europe to marginal forces. This may be true for the physical violence and some of the most extreme remarks. Yet radical verbal anti-Semitism has crept into the heart of the European mainstream as well.

Speaking at a dinner given by the American Jewish Committee in Brussels, the U.S. ambassador to the European Union, Rockwell Schnabel, remarked that anti-Semitism in Europe is now almost as bad as it was in the 1930s, the decade in which Nazism came to power.⁸⁰ To soften the impact, a spokesman at the U.S. embassy said later that his remarks were "neither a personal opinion of Ambassador Schnabel nor the view of the U.S. Government."⁸¹

Such opinions, however, cannot be silenced. In May 2004, French parliamentarian Pierre Lelouche wrote about France:

Even in the 1930s, when the anti-Semitic press was particularly ferocious, the Jews were not attacked and beaten in the schools of the French Republic; the students were not knifed, the school buses were not attacked, the synagogues not put on fire. In short one did not have these kind of pogroms, "understood" if not justified by a certain elite and a certain press, no longer in the name of anti-Dreyfusism or fascism, but this time in the name of the rights of the Palestinian people and the Arab "humiliation."

Lelouche added: "In short one can be tranquil as an anti-Semite in the France of 2004." This attitude, in his view, created the climate for attacks on the Jews. He also mentioned that he had initiated a law to punish racist crimes severely that was unanimously adopted by the French parliament. However, afterward the law was hardly applied.⁸²

Phyllis Chesler, an American psychologist who has published a book on anti-Semitism,⁸³ believes the danger to the Jews today is "far graver and more complex than it was in the pagan or medieval-Christian world, or during World War Two." She claims the situation is indeed more serious than in the 1930s: "Jew haters are creating a situation in which—dare I say it? Yes, I must say it—another mass murder—perhaps even a Holocaust-like mass murder of Jews might be possible. Indeed, in my view, it has already begun, certainly not in America, and not yet in Europe—but in Israel."⁸⁴

A Period of Reference

The question as to what is similar and what is different in 1930s Europe and today's Europe merits ongoing, detailed analysis. A standard answer is that European anti-Semitism cannot go much further because of the strong counterforces in democratic societies. Those who claim this say that thanks to Holocaust education, European governments will never allow anything similar to happen again. Furthermore, European Jews who feel uncomfortable are free to emigrate to Israel or elsewhere.

The most radical difference from the 1930s is that Israel can make its voice heard in the community of nations. Moreover, globalization enables international Jewish organizations to pressure European governments to better protect Jewish communities. Also, European governments now admit that substantial anti-Semitism exists in Europe, and declare that it has to be fought.

The Arabs as Demonizers

At the same time, however, significant similarities exist between today and the 1930s, when Germany was the core promoter of systematic hatred of the Jews. Nowadays, influential forces demonizing the Jews are again at work, mainly outside Europe. In the postmodern world this role is distributed among many governments, religious bodies, and media in the Arab world. They do not differentiate in their mortal hatred between Israelis and Diaspora Jews.

In the 1930s, the Nazis claimed Jews were the source of all evil in the world, a role many Arabs now pin both on Israel and the Jews. Before the world war, those at the origins of demonization had many helpers, dispensers, and sympathetic bystanders. The Germans' National Socialist satellites and fascist allies abroad distributed the hate locally. During the war itself, many opportunists joined them in their actions. Today, Arab demonizers have many loyal supporters among Muslims living in the Western world, as well as among neo-Nazis.

Other major allies in the diabolization of Israel can be found on the European Left, and to some extent among mainstream parties. In the 1930s, the organizational framework for hate distribution was rigid. In the postmodern world, everybody can march with his hate, according to his own schedule, toward a set of goals, including Israel's destruction.

By piecing together experts' insights, one can also identify less obvious similarities between the two periods. Holocaust psychologist Nathan Durst concludes that the Shoah mass murders not only fulfilled the desires of Nazis but also those of many other Europeans who eagerly assisted Hitler in various ways. He adds that reactions before and during the Second World War attest that the genocide fulfilled their ancient wish to have the Jews removed from their lives.

French philosopher Alan Finkielkraut said in an interview that many contemporary Europeans share the wish of Arab hate-mongers for Israel's disappearance since they imagine that if Israel ceases to exist, there will be no more terror.⁸⁵

Anti-Semitism: A European Disease

A few days after Schnabel made his statements Elie Wiesel, at an EU conference on anti-Semitism in Brussels, called anti-Semitism a European disease and mentioned that European Jews had not asked him "Should we leave?" but "When should we leave?"⁸⁶ Fischer, the only minister of a European government present, also spoke about Jewish friends who told him, to his consternation, that they would soon leave Europe.⁸⁷

Israeli Minister Natan Sharansky said at the conference that much of the criticism of Israel in recent years had become mixed with "demonization of Israel, double standards in attacking Israel and denying the legitimacy of the Jewish state."⁸⁸

Shimon Samuels, director for International Liaison of the Simon Wiesenthal Center, said that "Kalashnikov bullets, explosive belts and

Al-Kassem missiles, purchased out of the EU's...annual subsidy [to the Palestinian Authority], have killed over 900 Israelis and maimed thousands—this is anti-Semitism. EU-financed Palestinian media facilities—through satellite television and Internet hate-sites—impact on Moslem communities in Europe to attack their Jewish neighbors. This is anti-Semitism.”⁸⁹

In mid-2004 French Nazi-hunter Serge Klarsfeld, on a visit in Israel, said that French Jews would be best off leaving the country. He added that a lesson of the Holocaust was that it is better to leave a place where there is a wave of anti-Semitism than to stay and fight it. He mentioned that the father of a French Jew stabbed by a Muslim assailant in Paris had said to the prime minister that he would ask the American embassy for “political asylum” for his family.⁹⁰

An indicator of the European governments’ failure to adequately combat anti-Semitism is that Jews often have to hide their identity when they are in public. In a radio interview on November 2003, French Chief Rabbi Joseph Sitruk told French Jews to wear caps rather than kippas so as to avoid being attacked in the streets.⁹¹

The problem has become a European one. In Salonika, Rabbi Frisis walks around in the streets wearing a cap. In 2003, he was attacked and beaten at the city train station. “Someone came over and without saying anything, began to hit me. I started to hit him back to defend myself, and then other people came over and separated the two of us.”⁹²

Ruben Vis, secretary of the NIK, the umbrella organization of the Dutch Ashkenazic community, said that he is regularly insulted when wearing a kippa in public and sometimes is pushed in the tramway. He now never wears his skullcap in the western and eastern quarters of Amsterdam, and rarely in the center of the city—places where there are many Dutchmen whose parents immigrated from North Africa, mainly Morocco.⁹³

Those who do not want to hide their identity by taking off their skullcap are increasingly menaced and/or have to change their habits. Youth rabbi Menachem Sebbag relates how a Dutch youngster of Moroccan descent approached his wife with a screwdriver and said, “I’ll cut your heart out.” Sebbag, who has a Moroccan father, understands the Arabic words when he is insulted, such as, “I’m going to slaughter you like a pig.” Sometimes they shout at him, “Sharon supporter, murderer.” He now goes out as little as possible and says, “Since I stopped going anywhere, I have less problems.” Once he had a Coca Cola can thrown at his head.⁹⁴

Gideon van der Sluis, the young cantor of a synagogue in the Amsterdam de Pijp neighborhood, told an interviewer that on Shabbat,

every time he passes a pizzeria where Moroccan youngsters usually gather, wearing a white kippa, the group curses him saying: “*Yahud, yahud* [“Jew” in Arabic], dirty cancer *Yahud*.” He adds that this is a major problem and is becoming worse. “Five years ago, if you heard one such remark a year, it was a lot. Now it happens every week.”⁹⁵

Multiple Intimidation

The violent threats by immigrants from Muslim countries are not the only way Jews are intimidated in Europe. They are often held responsible for Israel’s deeds by their fellow citizens. These people would be greatly surprised if somebody held them accountable for the actions of their own governments, let alone for those of coreligionists or co-atheists. In the anti-Israeli European atmosphere, some Jews now remain silent about their identification with Israel and avoid criticizing their own governments

French sociologist Shmuel Trigano notes that conscious Jews in France increasingly withdraw into Jewish social circles as a result of the anti-Israeli atmosphere prevailing in the country. He says that he frequently hears Jews say things like: “We don’t go to dinner with our non-Jewish friends anymore nor do we see them.” He explains that at many dinners in town, people talk aggressively about Israel and, thus, about Jews. “Jews then feel the need to defend Israel from the excessive criticism. They are then accused of being supporters of Sharon and violence. In light of this, Jews decide to avoid such discussions and meetings.”⁹⁶

These are among the many signs of the increasing intimidation of Jews in Europe’s democratic societies, which has many other consequences. American academic Ari Goldman writes about his visit to Salonika’s Jewish museum: “At the museum entrance there is an armed guard, a steel gate and a buzzer system. The museum director said the museum gets few visitors these days, especially after the bomb attacks on two synagogues in Istanbul in 2003 in which 20 people were killed.” A few months later, the museum director told this author that while non-Jewish schools visited before the Istanbul bombings, they now were no longer coming.”⁹⁷

Goldman, noting that in the Holocaust fifty thousand of Salonika’s Jews were killed, representing 97 percent of the Jewish population, comments: “After all the hatred [against American Jews] I’ve heard from European academics, I would love to bring a few here to Salonika to show them what Jews without political power look like.”⁹⁸

The EU's Double-Handed Anti-Semitism

Recently, the European Union has made some efforts to counteract anti-Semitism. Yet its frequent one-sided condemnations of Israel over the years have been an integral part of the incendiary efforts against Israel, which have impelled the outbursts of European anti-Semitism. Proving this in greater detail would require a systematic analysis of the declarations of EU foreign ministers over the past years. In many condemnations of Israeli policy France has played a leading role, as has been particularly evident in UN voting.

The European Union's anti-Semitism can be described as double-handed. With its inflammatory anti-Israeli declarations, it plays the role of arsonist. The EU also serves as "fireman" by trying, at the same time, to quench the flames of classic anti-Semitism. This is becoming increasingly clearer as events unfold.

One example of how EU members promote incitement occurred on 15 April 2002 when Sweden, Austria, France, Belgium, Spain, and Portugal supported a resolution of the UN Commission on Human Rights that, in the words of the SWC, "endorsed Palestinian terrorism and accused Israel of carrying out 'mass killings' in the disputed territories."⁹⁹

Such declarations should be seen in the wider framework of the overall distorted European attitude toward Israel. In an interview, Israeli ambassador to Germany Shimon Stein said: "Israel hopes to normalize its relationship with Europe. Until now this relationship has not been normal. Relations are always used by Europeans as a weapon. If Israel does what Europe wants, then we are rewarded. If there are differences of opinion, Israel is threatened with sanctions. In this way you don't treat a state which has an interest that Europe commits itself in the Middle East...." He added, however, that the German government behaved differently.¹⁰⁰

The arsonist/fireman ambivalence of the EU and many of its members was well illustrated on the occasion of Yasser Arafat's death. One extreme example was the extraordinary honor paid by French President Jacques Chirac to the memory of a man who was a pioneer of contemporary worldwide terrorism and had also paid for the killing of French citizens in Israel. While the Dutch were announcing their determination to fight terrorism after the killing of filmmaker Theo Van Gogh by Muslim extremist Mohamed Boyeri, Queen Beatrix and Prime Minister Balkenende sent telegrams of condolence to Suha Arafat. When British Foreign Secretary Jack Straw recently visited the Middle East, he laid a garland of red and gold chrysanthemums on Arafat's grave in Ramallah and signed the book of condolences. A senior Israeli diplomat was quoted

anonymously as saying, “When you lay a wreath at someone’s grave, you are identifying with what the person believed in.”¹⁰¹ At the same time, the European leaders constantly proclaim the need for a more effective fight against terrorism.

Sweden’s Hypocrisy

A typical example of European hypocrisy is the Swedish Social Democratic government of Goran Persson. He was the driving force behind the initial project on Holocaust education, which led to the Stockholm International Forum on the Holocaust in January 2000. At the same time, Persson and, in particular, several members of his government have criticized Israel much more severely than they have terrorist states.

The hypocrisy of this criticism should also be viewed against the background of Sweden’s nonexistent record of prosecuting war criminals after the Second World War. Swedish perpetrators have never been investigated even though hundreds of Swedes were SS volunteers, one of them serving in the Treblinka extermination camp. After 1944, leading Baltic war criminals found ready refuge in Sweden with the knowledge of the Swedish government. They lived there for many decades. Swedish archives on these matters remain closed.¹⁰²

A recent study of Arab and Muslim anti-Semitism in Sweden concluded that this variety, “unlike anti-Semitism that traditionally finds expressions in Nazi circles—is not mentioned or in any way highlighted in the public debate. On the contrary, it is actively hushed up, excused or even denied in the media and by the political, academic and intellectual establishment.”¹⁰³

Freivalds’s Visit to Israel

Another demonstration of Swedish hypocrisy occurred when Foreign Minister Laila Freivalds came to Israel in June 2004. She first visited Yad Vashem, then heavily criticized Israel in a meeting at the Foreign Ministry. She remained silent on current Swedish anti-Semitism. This technique of paying honor to dead Jews, criticizing Israel, and ignoring or belittling one’s own country’s major delinquencies toward living Jews is a common European phenomenon.

On the occasion of her visit, four former chairmen of the Jewish community of Stockholm sent a letter to the editor of *Haaretz* in which they summarized contemporary Swedish anti-Semitism. The

letter first praised Sweden for having received Jews fleeing the Holocaust during the Second World War, and Prime Minister Persson for initiating the Living History Project.

They then went on to say:

The number of verbal and physical attacks against Jews has increased in Sweden. Youngsters in schools give evidence of how they hide the fact of being Jews, as they are attacked both verbally and physically. Teachers testify that students refuse to participate in classes when Judaism is studied. Survivors report feelings of fear. The police stand passively by when extremists attack pro-Israel and anti-racist manifestations.

They added: "Over the last decades, Sweden has become a center of racist and anti-Semitic White Power music, and several anti-Semitic groups have established Swedish websites spreading anti-Semitic propaganda. The Swedish Church has just recently initiated a boycott campaign [against Israel], a reminder of the commercial boycott of Jews in various societies in the past."¹⁰⁴

Textbooks and Inclining One's Head

Political scientist Yohanan Manor has studied many Middle Eastern textbooks. He says: "The European Union has a heavy responsibility in the transformation of the Palestinian education system into a war machine against the Oslo process. This despite the fact that it had excellent means to assure that Palestinian education should serve the process of peace and contribute to the permanence of the historical compromise that was reached."

Manor concludes that the European Union, despite the financial support it and its member countries give to the Palestinian Authority, has neglected its supervisory role of the textbooks.¹⁰⁵

More recently, when it became clear that anti-Semitism was rife in Europe, and claims were increasingly made that European leaders had contributed to it, some European leaders went out of their way to show a more positive attitude toward Jews and, occasionally, Israelis. In Austrian newspapers a photograph was published of Israel's Ashkenazi Chief Rabbi Yonah Metzger placing his hands in blessing on the inclined head of Thomas Klestil, then the Austrian president. This took place at a meeting of rabbis organized by the Chabad movement. For this event European Commission President Romano Prodi flew in from Brussels to participate in the dedication of the first Jewish teachers' academy in Vienna since the Holocaust.¹⁰⁶

Chirac: A Paradigm of Ambivalence

French President Jacques Chirac is a paradigm of European ambivalence toward the Jews. He denied the existence of anti-Semitism in France till late in 2003. This defiance of the facts frequently expressed by European personalities—another phenomenon that accompanies European anti-Semitism—merits detailed investigation.

In France—the country with the highest number of violent incidents—top politicians have maintained this position for a long time, trying to portray the incidents as hooliganism. Only in November 2003, after yet another arson attack on a Jewish institution—a private school—did Chirac suddenly turn around and say that France had to combat anti-Semitism.

Another perspective on Chirac was revealed by Israel Singer, chairman of the Executive Committee of the World Jewish Congress. He recalls that a few years ago, Chirac had told him that Jews are the cause of anti-Semitism in France and everywhere else.¹⁰⁷

Marvin Hier, founder and dean of the SWC, tells of a meeting with Chirac in May 2003:

We were then in Paris for a conference on anti-Semitism and the struggle for tolerance convened at UNESCO's international headquarters co-sponsored by this UN body and the SWC. The French President told us there was no anti-Semitism in France; it was some young hooligans who had attacked Jews. We replied that many French Jews—particularly in the Parisian suburbs and provinces—had told us different stories, and that anti-Semitism was rampant in France.

Chirac Invites a Would-Be Mass Murderer

Hier continued:

Chirac then mentioned a stop during his campaign for the presidency in spring 2002. He shook hands with a young man who said to him that he had just finished his undergraduate studies in France. Chirac asked him, "Are you going to graduate school?" He replied, "No, I'm going back to my country, Palestine," adding, "I'm going to kill Jews as soon as I get off the plane."

The president said he could not continue the conversation as there were many people wanting to shake his hand. He asked an aide to invite this would-be mass murderer for lunch at his residence in the Elysee Palace. When the young man came for lunch, he told the president he was not a member of an Islamic fundamentalist group. Chirac asked him, "Why do you want to kill Jews?" He said,

"I'm not an Islamic fundamentalist, but the Jews have humiliated us." Then Chirac said to our delegation, "You see, it is not just fundamentalism. People do not take into account the humiliation of the Palestinians."

I replied, "Mr. President, with the greatest of respect, I'm sure you would not deviate one single iota from the policies of Arik Sharon if it were French cafeterias, buses, or hotels which were bombed. Like Israel, you would order your army to go after the terrorists and use helicopters. Of course you have a right to do this, as you have a primary obligation to the security of your country's citizens. I think Palestinians are mainly humiliated by their despotic leaders who failed to accept the opportunity when Barak made them a generous peace offer. They did not take it because they wanted to destroy Israel."

We also discussed France's role in Europe's refusal to label Hamas a terrorist organization, which they still refused to do at that time. We told him we thought their behavior was outrageous.

It was a tough conversation, and in the end we agreed to disagree on all the major points. He said he would fight wholeheartedly to prevent anti-Semitism in France, but that it was not there.

After we left the Elysee Palace we went to a reception at the home of Baron David de Rothschild. Two of our group missed the bus and took a cab. They wore skullcaps, and were right outside Baron de Rothschild's home when a few people started insulting them, saying things like, "Get out of France, you Jews." That was an "eloquent" answer to Chirac's vain claim that there is no anti-Semitism in France.¹⁰⁸

There is another important aspect to this story: which leader of a democratic country invites a declared would-be murderer to lunch in his residence? One might add to this: which president of a democracy attends the funeral of a mass murderer? When Syrian president Hafez el Assad—whose regime murdered twenty thousand inhabitants, mainly civilians, after an uprising in the Syrian city of Hama—died in June 2000, Chirac was the only Western head of state to fly to Damascus.¹⁰⁹

French Sympathies

The current worldwide wave of anti-Semitism shows that expressions of it that in the past may have been restricted to extremists, have now permeated mainstream European society. In France it may be more pronounced than elsewhere in Europe where it is, however, no less dangerous.

Trigano says that while French Muslims are a major force in the violent anti-Jewish attacks, "anti-Semitism exists in France, which has nothing to do with the Islamists. The new anti-Semitism, disguised as

anti-Zionism, is very present in the extreme left and right, each of which collected 20 percent of the votes in the first round of the French presidential elections of 2002.”¹¹⁰

French anti-Semitism finds a fertile infrastructure in the negative view most Frenchmen hold of Israel. In a poll carried out in France for *L'Institut Français de Tel Aviv* in April 2004, the respondents expressed their highest sympathy among the ten countries they were asked about for two nondemocratic countries: 68 percent had sympathy for Egypt and 16 percent had no sympathy for it; for Morocco the figures were 69 percent and 20 percent, respectively.

Next in line was Russia with 53 percent sympathy and 33 percent lack of it. Then came Lebanon with 47 percent and 33 percent, followed by Palestine—the questionnaire represented it as a country—with 45 percent and 38 percent, followed by Jordan with 40 percent and 37 percent. The remaining four countries were viewed negatively: 43 percent viewed the United States with sympathy while 49 percent did not; for Israel the figures were 38 percent and 48 percent; the last two in line were Syria with 32 percent and 44 percent, and Iran at the bottom with 25 percent and 61 percent.¹¹¹

Meanwhile, French spokesmen claim that their country intends to lead Europe's fight against anti-Semitism. For instance, Nicole Guedj, French deputy minister for victims' rights, said at an international conference on anti-Semitism in Jerusalem: “I hope that our example, our firm action, will inspire other states.”¹¹² When severely criticized for France's inciting role against Israel in the past, she replied that Jews should look to the future. A few weeks later France paid extraordinary honors to Arafat, both before and after his death.

Denial and Turnabout

There has been substantial denial of the existence of anti-Semitism by European leaders. In June 2003, EU foreign policy chief Javier Solana was criticized by members of the U.S. Congress for denying anti-Semitism.¹¹³ Even as late as December 2003, EU ambassador to Israel Giancarlo Chevallard downplayed European anti-Semitism.¹¹⁴ By March 2004 he finally turned around, saying, “Concern about anti-Semitic developments in Europe is absolutely legitimate.”¹¹⁵

At the end of February 2004, two elder French statesmen, former Prime Minister Raymond Barre and former EU Commission President Jacques Delors, denied on television that there was anti-Semitism in France, specifically including Muslims and French schools in this statement.¹¹⁶

In November 2003, President Chirac announced extra security measures in places of worship, severe punishment of anti-Semitic perpetrators, and reinforced civics courses in French schools.¹¹⁷ He has repeated that statement a number of times since. Chirac also invited Israeli President Katzav for a state visit to France; the event, which took place in February 2004, was much publicized.

Then French Interior Minister Nicolas Sarkozy, who had acknowledged the severity of anti-Semitism in France when Chirac was still denying it, had made substantial efforts to improve the security situation in France since he was appointed in June 2002. He told Katzav that nobody should have to hide his Jewish identity in France.¹¹⁸

Although Katsav praised the French commitment to combat anti-Semitism during his visit,¹¹⁹ he remained silent about how grave the situation was. Israeli politicians who make such one-sided statements harm the battle against anti-Semitism; primarily, they damage their own credibility.

Robert Wistrich observed:

Anti-Semitism cannot be fought where there is obstinate denial that the phenomenon even exists, as happened in France until about a year ago. I still remember the incredible spectacle of the President of the French Republic declaring that there was “no anti-Semitism in France,” with Mr. Shimon Peres (then Foreign Minister of Israel) at his side, nodding in agreement. That was before the last French presidential elections [in spring 2002], at a time when synagogues and community centers were going up in flames, schools and Jewish students were being attacked, and individual Jews were being harassed on a scale unknown since 1945.¹²⁰

French Anti-Semitism Continues to Rise

A few weeks after Katsav’s visit, this once again became clear when five prominent French intellectuals, including three Nobel Prize winners, published in the daily *Libération* a call on the teachers and headmasters of French schools not to permit anti-Semitism.¹²¹ Since then there have been many additional anti-Semitic incidents in France and official data indicates that, despite all the belated government efforts, anti-Semitism in France is on the rise in 2004.

The Israeli attitude toward anti-Semitism in France—or should one say French anti-Semitism—remains confusing. Toward the end of August 2004 another building was torched in Paris, the Jewish Social Center in Rue Popincourt. It later turned out that the arsonist was a homeless Jew. Israeli Foreign Minister Silvan Shalom came specially to Paris to meet Interior Minister Dominique de Villepin

and Foreign Minister Michel Barnier. These two officials once again announced the French government's intention to fight anti-Semitism.

Shalom expressed the wish that these words would be translated into actions. During his stay in Paris, however, he remained silent about how France had played the leading role in the European support for the discriminatory UN resolution condemning Israel's security fence. It is not difficult to see what signals France's role at the United Nations sends to the anti-Semites in the country.¹²²

In the meantime, anti-Semitic acts in France continue to increase. After the fire in the Jewish Social Center, Chief Rabbi Sitruk met with Justice Minister Dominique Perben to discuss the general problem. It turned out that from 1 January to 20 August 2004, the Ministry had registered 298 anti-Semitic acts, an increase in the magnitude of 100 percent compared to the previous year's period. Of these, 162 involved attacks on property including arson, 69 involved anti-Semitic publications, and 67 involved aggressions or insults against people. In 80 percent of these cases the perpetrators had not yet been identified.¹²³

Greece, the Worst in Western Europe?

Among the pre-2004 members of the European Union, it is in Greece that current verbal anti-Semitism—and general xenophobia—is probably the worst. The political and media climate in the country is conducive to a broad range of anti-Semitic activities. Whereas in many European countries much of the most violent anti-Semitism comes from the Arab and Muslim communities, in Greece this is not the case. It is a homogeneous country where over 98% of the population is ethnic Greek.

Moses Altsech, born in Greece and now an academic in the United States, has long researched anti-Semitism in his native country. He states: "Anti-Semitism occurs in Greece not only among extreme rightists and leftists, but is embedded in Greek mainstream society. It manifests itself in many ways: in a religious context, in education, in the application of the law, in the media, as well as through politically-motivated anti-Semitism in the major parties."¹²⁴

He adds:

In Greece, one does not have to buy newspapers to read their anti-Semitic remarks. Many kiosks hang such newspapers with pegs from a wire all day while weeklies hang there for the entire week. One can thus read the front page regardless of whether or

not one actually purchases the paper. Sometimes this page is blatantly anti-Semitic. *Stochos* has even serialized *The Protocols of the Elders of Zion*. Consequently, one no longer has to buy the book, which is not terribly hard to find in Greek bookstores in the first place.¹²⁵

Another observer of the Greek scene, Andrew Apostolou, mentioned that after September 11, 2001, there were many anti-Semitic expressions in Greece, which journalists largely failed to report. He noted that there is no other country where the Israeli Embassy had twice to issue official denials of the Arab allegations that Jews had been warned not to go to the World Trade Center on that date.¹²⁶

Anti-Semitic Graffiti

There is a great deal of anti-Semitic graffiti in Greece. Holocaust monuments and Jewish cemeteries are frequently vandalized. Swastikas are recurrent. Anti-Semitic cartoons are common even in mainstream papers. An example among many was the one in the pro-Pasok daily, *Eleftherotypia*, in which a woman asks a man after the killing of Sheikh Yassin, "Why did the Jewish government kill a religious leader?" The man answers: "They are practicing for Easter."¹²⁷

The same paper ran a cartoon in April 2002 titled "Holocaust II." It showed a fat Israeli soldier pointing a gun at a thin Arab woman with her hands raised, and below it the famous picture of the Warsaw Ghetto child raising his hands. The caption read: "Sharon war machine is attempting to carry out a new Holocaust, a new genocide."¹²⁸

While the word Jew has made a comeback as a pejorative in many countries in Europe, in Greece it never left. Both Pasok circles and the presently ruling right-of-center New Democracy Party have used these expressions. In March 2004, the pro-Pasok daily *Avriani* accused the outgoing Prime Minister Costas Simitis of not having handed over the party leadership to his successor, George Papandreou, so as to avoid electoral defeat. The paper referred to him as "the Jew Simitis."¹²⁹ As far as is known, he has no Jewish ancestry.

In 2000, a New Democracy member of parliament, Gerassimos Yakoumatos, referred in parliament to then Prime Minister Simitis as "the First High Priest of Judaism." For a long time, New Democracy had a parliamentarian named George Karatzaferis who regularly makes anti-Semitic remarks. The party only expelled him because he insinuated a homosexual relationship between the party's leader and now also Prime Minister Kostas Karamanlis, and his press secretary.¹³⁰

In 2002, Karatzaferis attacked Simitis for being unable to defend Greece's interests because of his (alleged) Jewish origins. He also said that the Jews were behind the 9/11 attacks.¹³¹ Karatzaferis also operates an anti-Semitic television station, and is now head of a small right-wing party, Laos, that gained one seat in the June 2004 elections for the European Parliament.

For some time the SWC has been warning "recognizable Jews" not to travel to Greece in view of the numerous anti-Semitic incidents in the country. It repeated this warning after the parliamentary elections of March 2004 when the New Democracy Party came to power.¹³²

International Conferences

After a few years of intensified anti-Semitic outbursts in Europe—but not only there—the Jewish organizations managed to persuade several international organizations to hold conferences on the subject. The first one was the June 2003 conference of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), which took place in Vienna. This body has fifty-five member states that include, in addition to the European countries, the United States, Canada, and Russia.

The Americans and the Jewish organizations insisted that anti-Semitism be dealt with as a specific issue. Wistrich, who addressed the conference, wrote afterward:

The Europeans were clearly more reluctant to deal with anti-Semitism as a distinct issue, preferring to address it under the general heading of racism, xenophobia and discrimination. One could feel, in the remarks of the Dutch Chair, a barely concealed desire to get through the business with the Jews so that more "politically correct" issues of countering racial discrimination and Islamophobia could be dealt with. This was, I think, the position of many Western and Central European States (including Britain and France), which had they been left to their devices, would probably never have initiated such an event in the first place. The most notable exception was the Germans, who proposed a follow-up conference in Berlin next year, to the delight of Mr. Giuliani and the American delegation.¹³³

The OSCE has since held additional conferences on the subject. The main one took place in Berlin on 28–29 April 2004, and concluded with a joint declaration of the participating countries. This "Berlin Declaration" condemned all manifestations of anti-Semitism, and the countries made a commitment to "strive to ensure that their legal systems foster a safe environment free from anti-Semitic harassment, violence or discrimination in all fields of life."¹³⁴

In May 2003, a conference on anti-Semitism and the struggle for tolerance convened at UNESCO headquarters in Paris, cosponsored by this body and the SWC. In February 2004, a seminar on anti-Semitism was held in Brussels under the auspices of the European Commission, the European Jewish Congress, and the Conference of European Rabbis.

In June 2004, another OSCE conference took place in Paris dealing with how to combat the proliferation of racist, anti-Semitic, and xenophobic propaganda on the Internet. Yet another conference on racism convened in Brussels in September 2004.

In addition, the United Nations held a conference on the subject in June 2004 that was addressed by its Secretary-General Kofi Annan. This came three years after the United Nations' Anti-Racism Conference in Durban, with its explosion of anti-Semitism.

What purpose do these conferences serve? The ADL hailed the Berlin Declaration as "the end of European denial."¹³⁵ Whether there is more than that, time will tell. What is clear, however, is that this European denial went on for years while the number of anti-Semitic incidents increased. Thus there is a major backlog in the European governments' fight against anti-Semitism. Probably the best one can hope for in the immediate future is that the gap between the anti-Semitic developments and what is done to combat them in Europe will not increase further.

Some Jewish leaders think the Berlin Declaration will enable them to hold countries accountable if they do not undertake what they agreed to do. Such a process, however, is by nature a slow one. On the other hand, the risk exists that these conferences will enable European leaders to create the impression that they are fighting anti-Semitism while in reality doing little.

What to Do?

The major study mentioned above, prepared for the EUMC, recommends a multitude of combined activities for combating anti-Semitism. These include the development of sound data and information about anti-Semitic phenomena, which can be achieved by having state institutions monitor anti-Semitism in the individual EU countries. This is a prime target because as long as anti-Semitic attacks are obscured in the general crime figures one cannot even achieve the most basic understanding of how severe the problem is.

The EUMC report also recommends that civil society should undertake dialogues, while the media have "to be addressed to report about ethnic and cultural groups in a responsible way." In addition,

the report prescribes a variety of actions on the political level, including legislation and educational steps.¹³⁶

Many other aspects could be added. Hate crimes should be severely punished and measures should be taken against pupils who make it impossible to teach the Holocaust in schools.

However important such actions may be, the main problem is the political and media climate in Europe. The first important step would be for European governments to halt their discriminatory statements against Israel. One should not, however, be too hopeful because it will be difficult to undo what has been indirectly promoted for so long. This is all the more so because it is an accretion to the longstanding elements of anti-Semitism in European culture.

Various optimistic observers say that all will become quiet again when a "just peace with the Palestinians" is reached, ignoring the genocidal intentions of substantial parts of the Palestinian population and leadership. If a peace or temporary truce is reached, this may be helpful to the extent that extreme left-wing anti-Semitism will be somewhat diverted to undermining other aspects of Western society. These positions ignore, however, the fact that the Arab hate campaigns against the West, including the Jews, have an ideological background that goes far beyond the Palestinian issue.

A more pessimistic view about Western perceptions getting closer to reality is expressed by the American Islam expert Daniel Pipes, who asserted: "The European Union's unwillingness to confront the pattern of anti-Jewish hostility emerging from Muslim religious, media, and educational institutions is decades old. All indicators suggest it is unlikely Europeans will have the courage to confront this problem adequately. One may expect a major Jewish exodus from Europe, perhaps like that from Muslim countries fifty years ago."

Pipes forecasts that as attacks by Islamists continue, people will be roused. "These assaults will awaken people. I expect it to be a one-way process of what I call 'education by murder.'" Worries about radical Islam, he predicts, will increase: "I do not expect to hear many say, 'Well, I used to be worried about the threat of militant Islam, but no longer.' As time passes and more events occur, their assessment will become more realistic." Although Pipes was specifically referring to Americans, a similar process, albeit slower, may take place in Europe.¹³⁷

The current reality is somewhat different. There are indications, particularly in France, that significant numbers of Jews are considering leaving the country in view of the many anti-Semitic incidents and the authorities' impotence to identify the perpetrators, bring them to court, and have them convicted. On the other hand, the influx of Russian Jews into Germany continues.

What Should the Jews Do?

European anti-Semitism is so major and manifests itself in so many ways that Jewish organizations should no longer limit themselves to protesting against individual cases of such racism. A more systematic "Europewatch" to monitor extreme politicians, institutions, media, and intellectuals should be initiated.

Although Jewish efforts cannot eliminate European anti-Semitism, they can mitigate it to some extent by exposing the methods and methodologies of the Jew-haters. Furthermore, Jewish organizations can mobilize potential allies who today remain silent but, when part of a group, may counteract some of the anti-Semitic currents.

European anti-Semitism must be watched closely as developments unfold. This is not only in the interests of the Jews, but in those of European democracy in general. Making Europeans aware of that is a further important step in the battle against anti-Semitism.

In Conclusion

Attitudes toward the Jews have often been an indicator of a society's health. The current anti-Semitism in Europe is so diverse and so widespread that understanding it requires substantial knowledge about the many complex characteristics and developments of European society.

Anti-Semitism illustrates that what Europe claims and wants to be is not what it is. It shows that many of the truth-seeking, humanitarian, and democratic claims of Europe are largely a façade. That many Jews are so intimidated that they try to hide their identity in public is a major new accusation on the Jewish people's lengthy charge sheet against the European democracies.

The initial ongoing denial by European governments of the anti-Semitic explosion reflects the state of truth-seeking in Europe. That most perpetrators of anti-Semitic incidents are never found is a further indicator of the poor protection of civil liberties in these arrogant democracies. That so few of the identified perpetrators are brought to court and even fewer are convicted provides both a litmus test as to the true European state of mind on racism as well as an indictment of European justice.

The European governments' attitude toward Israel as expressed by its one-sided and discriminatory declarations fits several of the criteria of new anti-Semitism as defined by Cotler. It also shows how anti-Semitism and politics march hand in hand. The increasing number

of conferences, declarations, and even actions against anti-Semitism aim to strengthen one side of Europe's double face. However, as long as the major dark aspects of its other face are not reduced and eliminated, the positive acts cannot undo what Europe incites. Europe's double-faced attitude is an indication of the intimate link between Europe's anti-Semitism and its politics.

It will become increasingly clear that the anti-Semitic explosion in Europe of the last few years is a sign of the continent's rapid moral decline. It may take much longer to prove that the same is true of the European attitude toward Israel.

Further incidents will make it unequivocally clear that there are sizable hotbeds of extreme racism among the Islamic minorities in Europe. It is beyond doubt that Europe has financed the education and propagation of hate by the Palestinian Authority. Further evidence may be needed to substantiate the claims that the European Union has also de facto supported Palestinian terrorism against Israel civilians with its funds.

In the meantime, both the European Jews and Israel must be extremely careful not to fall victim to the many forces that attack them. These have to be fought on a strategic level.

Notes

- * The research for this article has been partly supported by the World Jewish Congress.
- 1. This essay is an expanded version of the author's "Anti-Semitism: Integral to European Culture," *Post-Holocaust and Anti-Semitism*, No. 19, 1 April 2004.
- 2. Jonathan Sacks, "The New Anti-Semitism," *Haaretz*, 8 September 2002.
- 3. Douglas Davis, "Sacks: Nobody Will Ever Forgive the Jews for Holocaust," *Jerusalem Post*, 16 June 2004.
- 4. Simon Epstein, "Cyclical Patterns in Anti-Semitism: The Dynamics of Anti-Jewish Violence in Western Countries since the 1950s," *Analysis of Current Trends in Anti-Semitism*, no. 2 (Jerusalem: the Hebrew University, 1999), p. 1.
- 5. Richard Landes, "What Happens when Jesus Doesn't Come: Jewish and Christian Relations in Apocalyptic Time," *Terrorism and Political Violence*, Vol. 14, Spring 2002 (London: Frank Cass, 2002).
- 6. Manfred Gerstenfeld, *Europe's Crumbling Myths: The Post-Holocaust Origins of Today's Anti-Semitism* (Jerusalem: Jerusalem Center for Public Affairs, Yad Vashem, World Jewish Congress, 2003).
- 7. Manfred Gerstenfeld, interview with Bjarte Bruland and Irene Levin, "Norway: The Courage of a Small Jewish Community; Holocaust Restitution

- and Anti-Semitism," *Post-Holocaust and Anti-Semitism*, No. 10, 1 July 2003.
8. For an overview, see Gerstenfeld, *Europe's Crumbling Myths*.
9. Manfred Gerstenfeld, interview with Rabbi Abraham Cooper, "Anti-Semitism and Terrorism on the Internet: New Threats," *Post-Holocaust and Anti-Semitism*, No. 9, 1 June 2003.
10. www.adl.org/special_reports/protocols/protocols_recycled.asp.
11. Simon Wiesenthal Center, Press Release, "Easter Pogrom Hatemongering—Effigies, Desecration, Caricature: Greek Antisemitism Epidemic Persists," 20 April 2004.
12. Michael Freund, "Tackling Assimilation and Anti-Semitism in Salonika," *Jerusalem Post*, 8 February 2004.
13. Centre Simon Wiesenthal—Europe, "25 Months of Anti-Semitic Invective in Greece: Timeline: March 2002-April 2004," presented at the OSCE Conference on Anti-Semitism, 28–29 April 2004.
14. Manfred Gerstenfeld, interview with Moses Altsech, "Anti-Semitism in Greece: Embedded in Society," *Post-Holocaust and Anti-Semitism*, No. 23, 1 August 2004 (quoting *To Vima*, 15 March 2001.)
15. Greek Helsinki Monitor, Press Release, 27 June 2004.
16. "Manifestations of Antisemitism in the European Union," drafted for the European Monitoring Center on Racism and Xenophobia (EUMC) by the Center for Research on Antisemitism (ZFA) at Berlin Technical University, p. 17, www.eumc.eu.int/eumc/FT.htm, 2002.
17. Robert Fife, "UN Promotes Systemic Hatred of Jews, MP Says," *National Post*, 2 April 2002.
18. Per Ahlmark, *Det ar demokratin, dumbom!* (Timbro, 2004), p. 307. (Swedish)
19. www.jafi.org.il/agenda/2001/english/wk3-22/6.asp.
20. Centre Simon Wiesenthal—Europe, "25 Months."
21. "Manifestations of Antisemitism," p. 17.
22. *Le Nouvel Observateur*, 8 November 2001 (French).
23. Faisal al Yafai, "Cleric Hits Back at Uniformed Critics," *The Guardian*, 12 July 2004.
24. Manfred Gerstenfeld, interview with Trevor Asserson, "What Went Wrong at the BBC: A Public Monopoly Abusing Its Charter through Bias against Israel," *Jerusalem Viewpoints*, No. 511, 15 January 2004.
25. AFP/Expatica quoted in JCPA, Daily Alert, 5 December 2003.
26. Manfred Gerstenfeld, interview with Malcolm Hoenlein in American Jewry's Challenge: Addressing the 21st New Century (Lanham, MD.: Rowman & Littlefield, forthcoming).
27. www.jafi.org.il/agenda/2001/english/wk3-22/6.asp.
28. *La Stampa*, 3 April 2002 (Italian).
29. Joel Kotek, "La Belgique et ses Juifs, De l'antijudaïsme come code culturel, à l'antisionisme comme religion civique," *Les Etudes du Crif*, 2004, p. 31 (French).
30. www.politicalcartoon.co.uk/html/exhibition.html.
31. *Ethnos*, 7 April 2002 (Greek).
32. *El Pais*, 7 July 2004 (Spanish).
33. Giles Foden and John Mullan, "When Authors Take Sides," *The Guardian*, 27 April 2002.

34. AP, "Author Compares Palestinian City to Nazi Death Camp," *Miami Herald Tribune*, 27 March 2002.
35. Anti-Defamation League, Press Release, "Portuguese Nobel Laureate's Remarks on Jews and the Holocaust Are 'Incendiary and Offensive,'" 15 October 2003.
36. Tom Paulin, "Killed in Crossfire," *The Observer*, 18 February 2001.
37. Manfred Gerstenfeld, interview with Irwin Cotler in *Europe's Crumbling Myths*, p. 220.
38. *Ibid.*, p. 219.
39. Anne F. Bayefsky, "Terrorism and Racism: The Aftermath of Durban," *Jerusalem Viewpoints*, No. 468, 16 December 2001, JCPA.
40. Manfred Gerstenfeld, interview with Irwin Cotler in *Europe's Crumbling Myths*, p. 219.
41. Alan Dershowitz, *The Case For Israel* (Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley & Sons, 2003), p. 198.
42. Claude Meyer, interview with Jean-Claude Milner, *Actualité Juive Hebdo*, No. 823, 11 December 2003 (French).
43. *Ibid.*
44. Richard Ingrams, "I'm Still on the Train," *The Observer*, 13 July 2003.
45. Emma Goldman, "Culture Shock in a British Classroom," *Jewish Week*, 21 May 2004.
46. Emmanuel Brenner, *Les Territoires perdus de la République* (Paris: Mille et Une Nuits, 2002) (French).
47. Yair Sheleg, "Enemies, a Post-National Story," *Haaretz*, 7 March 2003.
48. Alvin H. Rosenfeld, *Anti-Americanism and Anti-Semitism: A New Frontier of Bigotry* (New York: American Jewish Committee, 2003), p. 21.
49. Jacques Derrida and Jürgen Habermas, "Unsere Erneuerung," *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, 31 May 2003 (German).
50. Manfred Gerstenfeld, interview with Andrei S. Markovits, "European Anti-Americanism and Anti-Semitism: Similarities and Differences," *Post-Holocaust and Anti-Semitism*, No. 16, 1 January 2004.
51. *Ibid.*
52. Robert S. Wistrich, "Muslim Anti-Semitism," *American Jewish Committee*, 2002.
53. Manfred Gerstenfeld, interview with Georges-Elia Sarfati, "Language as a Tool against Jews and Israel," *Post-Holocaust and Anti-Semitism*, No. 17, 1 February 2004.
54. Manfred Gerstenfeld, interview with Simon Epstein, "Fifty Years of Intellectual Bias against Israel," *Post-Holocaust and Anti-Semitism*, No. 4, 1 January 2003.
55. Daniel Perdurant, "Anti-Semitism in Contemporary Greek Society," *Analysis of Current Trends in Anti-Semitism*, No. 7 (Jerusalem: Hebrew University, 1995), p. 10.
56. Per Ahlmark, "Palme's Legacy 15 Years On," *Project Syndicate*, February 2001.
57. Maurizio Molinari, *La Sinistra E Gli Ebrei In Italia: 1967-1993* (Milan: Corbaccio, 1995), p. 115 (Italian).

58. "Israel-Kritik oder Antisemitismus?" *Neue Zürcher Zeitung*, 26 April 2002 (German).
59. Simon Wiesenthal Center, "Twenty Months of Antisemitic Invective in Greece: March 2002-October 2003," 14 October 2003.
60. "Antisemitism Worldwide, 2002-3" (Stephen Roth Institute for the Study of Contemporary Anti-Semitism and Racism, Tel Aviv University.)
61. "Prefect Hits Israeli with Insults," *Kathimerini*, 10 July 2004.
62. Tom Happold, "Tonge sacked over bombing comments," *The Guardian*, 23 January 2004.
63. "Der Vorwurf des Antisemitismus wird auch als Knüppel benutzt," *Stern*, 18 June 2002 (German).
64. Melissa Kite, Chris Hastings, and David Bamber, "Jewish Fury as Labour Calls Letwin 'Fagin,'" www.news.telegraph.co.uk, 29 February 2004.
65. Fraser Nelson, "Anger over Dalyells's 'Jewish Cabal' Slur," *The Scotsman*, 5 May 2003.
66. "Manifestations of Antisemitism," p. 6.
67. Anti-Defamation League, Press Release, "ADL Survey of Five European Countries Finds One in Five Hold Strong Anti-Semitic Sentiments; Majority Believes Canard of Jewish Disloyalty" (New York), 31 October 2002.
68. "European Attitudes toward Jews: A Five Country Survey," *Anti-Defamation League*, October 2002.
69. *Ibid.*
70. Renato Mannheimer, "E antisemita quasi un italiano su cinque," *Corriere de la Sera*, 10 November 2003 (Italian).
71. Ruth E. Gruber, "Poll Shows Italian Teens Harbor Racist and Anti-Semitic Attitudes," *JTA*, 2 July 2003.
72. European Commission, "Iraq and Peace in the World," *Eurobarometer Survey*, No. 151, November 2003.
73. "European Poll: 46% Say Jews Are 'Different,'" *Haaretz*, 26 January 2004.
74. Stephen Bates, "One in Seven Britons Say Holocaust Is Exaggerated," *The Guardian*, 23 January 2004.
75. Wolfgang Benz, *Bilder vom Juden: Studien zum alltäglichen Antisemitismus* (Munich: Verlag C. H. Beck, 2001) p. 105 (German.)
76. Editorial, "L'Europe et Israël," *Le Monde*, 5 November 2003 (French).
77. Julie Burchill, "Good, Bad and Ugly," *The Guardian*, 29 November 2003.
78. Avirama Golan, "A Sprig of Hope on Europe's Left," *Haaretz*, 3 February 2004.
79. Ilka Schröder, "Europe's Crocodile Tears," *Jerusalem Post*, 19 February 2004.
80. Reuters, "U.S. Envoy: Anti-Semitism in Europe Nearly as Bad as in the 1930s," www.haaretzdaily.com, 13 February 2004.
81. Elaine Sciolino, "Europeans and Americans Seek Answer to Anti-Semitism," *New York Times*, 20 February 2004.
82. Pierre Lelouche, "Une loi tragiquement inappliquée," *Le Monde*, 14 May 2004 (French).
83. Phyllis Chesler, *The New Anti-Semitism: The Current Crisis and What We Must Do About It* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2003).
84. Phyllis Chesler, "Jews on the Precipice," www.JewishPress.com, 26 May 2004.

85. Mariano Man, "A European Dream of a Beautiful World, Free of Israel," *Makor Rishon*, 16 April 2004 (Hebrew).
86. Elaine Sciolino, "Europeans and Americans Seek Answer to Anti-Semitism," *New York Times*, 20 February 2004.
87. Richard Herzinger, "Konferenz der Gutwilligen," *Die Zeit*, www.zeit.de/2004/09/konferenz (German).
88. "Mainstream Propaganda Proof of anti-Semitism in EU: Israeli Minister," *EUBusiness*, 19 February 2004.
89. "Against Antisemitism, For a Union of Diversity," Press Information, Simon Wiesenthal Center, 19 February 2004.
90. Etgar Lefkovits, "French Nazi Hunter Encourages Jews to Leave France," *Jerusalem Post*, 19 June 2004.
91. Philip Carmel, "Proposals on Yarmulkes, Yom Kippur Given Mixed Reaction by French Jews," *JTA*, 14 December 2003.
92. Michael Freund, "Tackling Assimilation and Anti-Semitism in Salonika," *Jerusalem Post*, 8 February 2004.
93. Steffie Kouters, "Joden voelen zich ontheemd in hun eigen Mokum," *de Volkskrant*, 1 November 2003 (Dutch).
94. *Ibid.*
95. Paul Andersson Toussaint, "Nieuw taboe: 'jodenvriendje zijn,'" *De Groene Amsterdammer*, 31 January 2004 (Dutch).
96. Manfred Gerstenfeld, interview with Shmuel Trigano, "French Anti-Semitism: A Barometer for Gauging Society's Perverseness," *Post-Holocaust and Anti-Semitism*, No. 26, 1 November 2004.
97. Personal communication.
98. Ari L. Goldman, "Meanwhile: The Jewish Ghosts of Salonika," *International Herald Tribune*, 6 May 2004.
99. Simon Wiesenthal Center, Press Release, "SWC Protests Anti-Israel Vote by France, Sweden, Austria, Spain, Belgium and Portugal at UN Commission on Human Rights," 16 April 2002.
100. Jacques Schuster, "In Europa gibt es Stimmen, die wir nicht mehr verstehen," *Die Welt*, 19 November 2003 (German).
101. Herb Keinon, "Israel Fumes at Straw's Floral Tribute to Arafat," *Jerusalem Post*, 26 November 2004.
102. Efraim Zuroff, "Sweden's Refusal to Prosecute Nazi War Criminals—1986–2002," *Jewish Political Studies Review*, Vol. 14, Nos. 3–4, 2002, pp. 85–119.
103. Mikael Tossavainen, *Det förnekade hatet—Antisemitism bland araber och muslimer i Sverige* (Stockholm: Svenska Kommittén Mot Antisemitism, 2003), pp. 43–44 (Swedish).
104. Salomo Berlinger, Stefan Meisels, Torsten Press, and Willy Salomon, "Sweden Can Do Much More for Country's Jewish Community," *Haaretz*, 10 June 2004.
105. Yohanan Manor, *Les manuels scolaires palestiniens: une génération sacrifiée* (Paris: Berg International Éditeurs, 2003), p. 130ff (French).
106. Ruth Ellen Gruber, "Vienna Meetings Show Another Way for Community to Approach the State," *JTA*, 8 February 2004.
107. Manfred Gerstenfeld, interview with Israel Singer, "Restitution: The Second Round," *Post-Holocaust and Anti-Semitism*, No. 14, 2 November 2003.

108. Manfred Gerstenfeld, interview with Marvin Hier in *American Jewry's Challenge: Conversations Confronting the 21st Century* (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2004), p. 188.
109. Joseph Fitchett, "In Paris, Official Discord on the Syrian Transition," *International Herald Tribune*, www.ihf.com/HT/DIPLO/00/jf061300.html.
110. Manfred Gerstenfeld, interview with Shmuel Trigano in *Europe's Crumbling Myths*, pp. 215–216.
111. "Le regard des Français sur la société israélienne," http://www.tns-sofres.com/etudes/pol/170504_israel_r.htm (French).
112. Presentation by Nicole Guedj at the Global Forum against Anti-Semitism, Jerusalem, 27 October 2004.
113. Adam Entous, "US Lawmakers Criticize EU's Solana on Anti-Semitism," Reuters, 26 June 2003.
114. Herb Keinon, "EU Envoy: Anti-Muslim Sentiment on Rise," *Jerusalem Post*, 2 December 2003.
115. Richard Carter, "Vast Majority of Israelis Want to Join 'Antisemitic' EU," www.euobserver.com, 10 March 2004.
116. Eytan Ellenberg, "'Négationisme' à la télévision publique française," *Guysen Israel News*, 17 February 2004 (French).
117. John Tagliabue, "Chirac Unveils Policy against Anti-Semitism," *International Herald Tribune* 18 November 2003.
118. Greer Fay Cashman, "Katsav's France Visit a 'Surprising' Success," *Jerusalem Post*, 22 February 2004.
119. Philip Carmel, "In Israeli President's Paris Visit Emotional Symbols for French Jews," JTA, 19 February 2004.
120. Robert S. Wistrich, "Fighting Anti-Semitism," *Midstream*, February/March 2004, p. 22.
121. CRIF, "Anti-Semitism in State Run Schools," 15 March 2004.
122. "Shalom prône 'des lois plus dures' contre l'antisémitisme," *Liberation*, 25 August 2004 (French).
123. C.G. "Perben défend l'arsenal juridique contre l'antisémitisme," *Le Figaro*, 27 August 2004 (French).
124. Manfred Gerstenfeld, interview with Moses Altsech.
125. *Ibid.*
126. Andrew Apostolou, "La Grèce," in Manfred Gerstenfeld and Shmuel Trigano, eds., *Les Nouveaux Habits de l'Anti-Sémitisme Européen* (île de Noirmoutier, Editions Café Noir, 2004) (French).
127. Centre Simon Wiesenthal—Europe, "25 Months" (*Quoting Eleftherotypia*, 27 March 2004).
128. Anti-Defamation League, Press Release, "ADL Calls on Greek Government to Condemn Anti-Semitism in the Press," 22 July 2002. (referring to a cartoon in *Eleftherotypia*, 1 April 2002)
129. Manfred Gerstenfeld, interview with Moses Altsech (quoting *Avriani*, 11 March 2004).
130. *Ibid.*
131. Simon Wiesenthal Center, Press Information, "SWC to Greek Minister of Interior: 'Close Down Racist Politician's Television Mouthpiece of Hate,'" 11 October 2002.

132. Simon Wiesenthal Center, Press Information, "SWC to New Greek Prime Minister: 'Greek Anti-Semitism Justifies Continuation of Center's Travel Advisory,'" 15 March 2004.
133. Wistrich, "Fighting Anti-Semitism."
134. www.osce.org/documents/cio/2004/04/2828_en.pdf.
135. Anti-Defamation League, Press Release, "ADL Hails Berlin Declaration against Anti-Semitism as an 'End of European Denial,'" 29 April 2004.
136. "Manifestations of Antisemitism," pp. 11–13.
137. Manfred Gerstenfeld, interview with Daniel Pipes, "The End of American Jewry's Golden Era," *Post-Holocaust and Anti-Semitism*, No. 20, 2 May 2004.